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Sample Press Release: Kraft Cashew Sector Development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: USAID Press Office

WASHINGTON, DC - The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Kraft Foods Inc. announced today a public-private alliance to strengthen cashew production systems in Guinea and help lift local farmers out of poverty.

The alliance will strengthen local farmers and small businesses to effectively manage the growing cashew sector, while encouraging sustainable management of natural resources and fostering economic and social development in targeted regions of Guinea.

"Sustainable development is essential for countries such as Guinea to climb out of the depths of poverty. This program, which is an excellent example of USAID's Global Development Alliance model, will provide cashew farmers with the training and tools needed to achieve sustainability, thus assisting the nation in moving forward as a whole," said Frank Young, Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID's Africa Bureau. "The alliance between Kraft and USAID creates a win-win situation for Kraft, USAID and, most importantly, for the farmers of Guinea."

USAID will commit up to \$500,000 while Kraft and local partners in Guinea have pledged to fully match USAID's financial commitment. Kraft will commit up to \$250,000 to the alliance. "Kraft is excited to work with USAID to develop Guinea's cashew sector," said Brian Meinken, Senior Director, Commodity Procurement for Kraft. "Through this alliance, we will be contributing to a sustainable future for farmers and their families while helping to ensure a high quality supply of cashews for our consumers. As one of the largest cashew purchasers in the world, we have a strong stake in promoting a long-term future for the industry and those who depend on it."

Guinea, a French-speaking country in West Africa, is one of the poorest countries in the world. About 80% of its population lives by subsistence farming. Poverty and the use of unsustainable agricultural practices have resulted in the rapid degradation of the natural resource base, as farmers are forced to clear large tracts of land to meet basic food needs. USAID, as the lead Agency in implementing the U.S. Government's foreign assistance program, works to promote economic growth and combat hunger, poverty, disease and environmental degradation in developing countries around the world. USAID's Global Development Alliance is an important new model for delivering foreign assistance in the 21st century. By harnessing the expertise and resources of private corporations, foundations and other non-governmental actors in support of international development, programmatic results are greatly multiplied.

Kraft Foods markets many of the world's leading food brands, including Planters nuts, Kraft cheese, Nabisco cookies and crackers, Philadelphia cream cheese, Oscar Mayer meats, Post cereals and Milka chocolates, in more than 150 countries.

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